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EAMES TOY BIRD

CRAIG SUTTON

Mitchell Squire / Toy Studio / Spring 2011

The figure of a black wooden bird, purchased from the Appalachian mountain region of the eastern United States, was cherished by Charles and Ray Eames. This particular figure has stood in the center of their living room for over fifty years and has appeared in multiple photographs of their work. Over time, this prized object of American folk art evolved into an icon of the modern design duo. The Eames Bird Toy is a deconstruction of this celebrated icon. The abstract, almost crude character of the toy pays homage to the Eames' early abstract demonstrations. However, the overall playful, functional, sleek, and sophisticated qualities of the toy highlights the design principles that made Ray and Charles Eames one of the most celebrated modern designers of the 20th century. The toy is beautifully simple.

I created the toy with the intention of compiling the iconic Eames design principles into a simple entity, in this case, the black bird. In order to achieve this, I deconstructed the black bird and then resembled it into a minimal, rather crude form that captures the playful, functional, sleek, sophisticated, and abstract spirit of Charles and Ray Eames.

